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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BRIDGETOWN 000187

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DHS FOR DIR NATL TARGETING CTR TGOYER

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TAGS: [PTER](#) [KCRM](#) [CVIS](#) [EAIR](#) [PREL](#) [XL](#)
SUBJECT: JRCC ASSESSMENT, EMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

REF: STATE 26743

¶1. (SBU) The JRCC has proven to be an incredibly useful tool for this mission and in particular for our law enforcement community. Originally developed to screen for potential terrorist threats attendant to the 2007 Cricket World Cup (CWC), JRCC and the APIS system have had the unforeseen benefit of also tracking travel of dangerous fugitives, including a number of "most wanted" criminals from the U.S. and several INTERPOL targets. As STATE 26743 notes, 97 fugitives have been identified by JRCC since its inception in April, 2007 (note: our figures show 99, but may include more recent data), along with 894 "ties to terrorism" hits (our data: 1,226 hits). We have not had a mechanism to track specific cases to their conclusion, as DHS stops tracking once the notification is made and LEGAT and RSO at the mission do not have the time or resources to keep methodical record on success stories. However, we are confident that some three dozen fugitives have probably been extradited as a direct result of JRCC/APIS information.

¶2. (SBU) JRCC has also been beneficial in bringing together security professionals from 10 countries and territories in the Caribbean to share security information at a level of intimacy not previously achieved. This information sharing has also extended, in a far more limited fashion, to relations between Caribbean JRCC staff and DHS staff assigned to the unit, helping broaden our security dialogue with these countries and deepen trust among the partners. There continues to be some tension locally over "ownership" of JRCC, with both Trinidad and Tobago (holding the IMPACS seat) and Barbados (housing the actual JRCC platform) each desiring to keep "control" of the facility. But aside from that turf battle, all the participants have acknowledged and praised the usefulness of the JRCC without exception.

¶3. (SBU) JRCC members also complain, as do our own law enforcement agencies, that the limitations on sharing information between the USG and local JRCC members is an impediment to better cooperation. This may be an insurmountable obstacle in the short term for intelligence reasons, but anything that could be done to increase the amount of information sharing without compromising sources or operational effectiveness would gain substantial political capital.

¶4. (SBU) While the broad success of the JRCC is acknowledged, two main problems impede the overall efficiency of the unit. The first is the fact that many of the airlines that would be of primary concern for terrorism purposes, i.e. those flying into Dominica and St. Vincent from Venezuela (with connecting travel to Iran and Syria), do not submit passenger information to the JRCC. This is a glaring hole in the system - mitigated somewhat by the fact traveling out of either St. Vincent or Dominica, provided it is done via commercial air, would be entered into the APIS.

¶5. (SBU) The second weakness is not one that comes from JRCC, but which hinders JRCC's effectiveness nevertheless: the judicial bureaucracy in the United States cannot at present keep up with the pace of information flow coming out of the JRCC. The process of warrant notifications to local jurisdictions, confirmation of intent

to extradite, notification to DOJ's International Affairs department, further notification to host country Justice ministries, and determination of eligibility for extradition simply take too long to make many of the JRCC findings actionable. Bridgetown RSO estimates that at least 60 percent of the fugitives identified by JRCC were ultimately lost or let go because the U.S. side could not get the requisite paperwork together or a decision to extradite made within the 48 hours that most local security forces will track or detain an identified fugitive. In most of those cases, the U.S. prosecutor in the case balked at the cost of the extradition and decided not to pursue the case. We have excellent relationships with local law enforcement, and they have generally been responsive and cooperative, but they do not have the resources to track or hold fugitives indefinitely.

16. (SBU) In addition to these external problems, JRCC's effectiveness has been hampered by internal inefficiencies. The current personnel structure for DHS, wherein a series of short-term TDY officers staff the JRCC, is untenable. Those on 45-day rotations spend much of their time ascending the learning curve, and don't reach full effectiveness until they are due to depart. Those who stay longer are somewhat more effective, but we lose time and opportunity costs, especially in our RSO office, in training these staff and integrating them into the law enforcement community at the mission. The Embassy has approved NSDD-38 requests to hire four full-time DHS staff to man those positions - without permanent staffing, the important job of coordinating tracking of fugitives and TSDB hits will fall to our already overstretched RSO staff -- which is untenable. We have also learned that DHS is considering cutting the staffing at the JRCC from four to two positions - this would be disastrous, as the shift work that is necessary to properly man the unit would be impossible on a two-person rotation.

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17. (SBU) In short, JRCC and APIS are excellent law enforcement tools that are in some respects under-utilized, that are not properly supported in the U.S. by law enforcement agencies to push through the needed judicial bureaucratic processes, and that are not properly serviced by DHS under the current TDY personnel profile. It is essential that CPB staff the approved positions it requested through the NSDD-38 process. Such permanent staffing is vital not only to ensure adequate Embassy support for the positions, but also to ensure cost effective use of U.S. government resources. Permanent staffing would also allow the development of expertise and key relationships with local law enforcement officials that will strengthen our interactions with the JRCC and allow us to strengthen our mission's ability to prevent terrorists and criminals from exploiting the borders of Caribbean countries and territories.

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